Ladislas Lazaro
1872–1927

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE 1913–1927
DEMOCRAT FROM LOUISIANA

Representative Ladislas Lazaro, a country doctor from southwest Louisiana, was the second Hispanic American to serve in Congress with full voting rights. Propelled into national office in 1912 as a supporter of Democrat Woodrow Wilson's Progressive platform, Lazaro tended to the agricultural interests of his Louisiana district in the bayou country dotted with rice, cotton, and sugar cane plantations. He focused largely on protective tariffs and on improving farmers' access to markets through waterway and railway projects—an issue of primary importance to planters and businessmen who sought to deliver commodities to ports like New Orleans and Lake Charles. Addressed affectionately by colleagues and constituents alike as "Doctor" or "Doc," Lazaro was esteemed for his patient, dispassionate counsel. He was the second Hispanic American ever to chair a standing committee and, by the early 1920s, the longest-serving Hispanic Member to that point.[1]

Ladislas Lazaro was born on June 5, 1872, on the Lazaro plantation near Ville Platte, Louisiana, in St. Landry Parish, part of which is now Evangeline Parish.[2] Lazaro was the child of Marie Denise Ortego, a daughter of one of Ville Platte's founding Hispanic families, and Alexandre Lazaro, an émigré from the town of Risan, in what is now Montenegro in the Balkans.[3] The family lived on a plantation, which Lazaro's father farmed. When Ladislas was 12 years old, his father died; his mother then moved the family into Ville Platte. Ladislas Lazaro's lifelong friend René Louis De Rouen observed that Lazaro had a middle-class upbringing and was surrounded by local boys from similar stations in life, "neither very rich nor poor," knowing of "no hunger that he was not sure of satisfying and of no luxury which enervates the mind or body."[4] Lazaro attended local public and private schools in St. Landry Parish. He attended St. Isadore's College (a preparatory school now named Holy Cross High School) in New Orleans. In 1894 Lazaro graduated from the Louisville Medical College in Kentucky and began practicing as a family physician in Washington, Louisiana, a hamlet 15 miles southeast of Ville Platte. Lazaro married the former Mary (Mamie) Curley of Lake Charles, Louisiana, on December 21, 1895.[5] They raised three daughters—Elaine, Mary, and Eloise—and a son, Ladislas, Jr. Lazaro's medical practice thrived at the turn of the century, and he eventually was chosen by his colleagues to serve as first vice president of the state medical society in 1907.

Education issues in St. Landry Parish kindled Lazaro's interest in politics when his children became old enough to attend the local schools. In 1904 he was appointed to the parish school board; two years later he became board president. He pushed for agricultural high schools, establishing the first in St. Landry Parish. In July 1907 he declared his candidacy for a state senate seat that encompassed his home parish, along with neighboring Evangeline and Acadia Parishes. His platform centered largely on cleaning up the state government's employment and spending practices, although it also focused on improving funding for health and education. In addition, Lazaro advocated for agricultural interests, calling particularly for the increased study of scientific farming practices. "The future of this country is largely agricultural, and no effort should be spared to place it in position to compete successfully with scientifically trained rivals," he said. Lazaro's politics derived from a common Progressive impulse, a faith that rationality and scientific methodology would improve society by fostering a better-educated citizenry and a renewed commitment to public service.[6] Lazaro ran unopposed and won re-election, again without opposition, in 1912. In Baton Rouge, he

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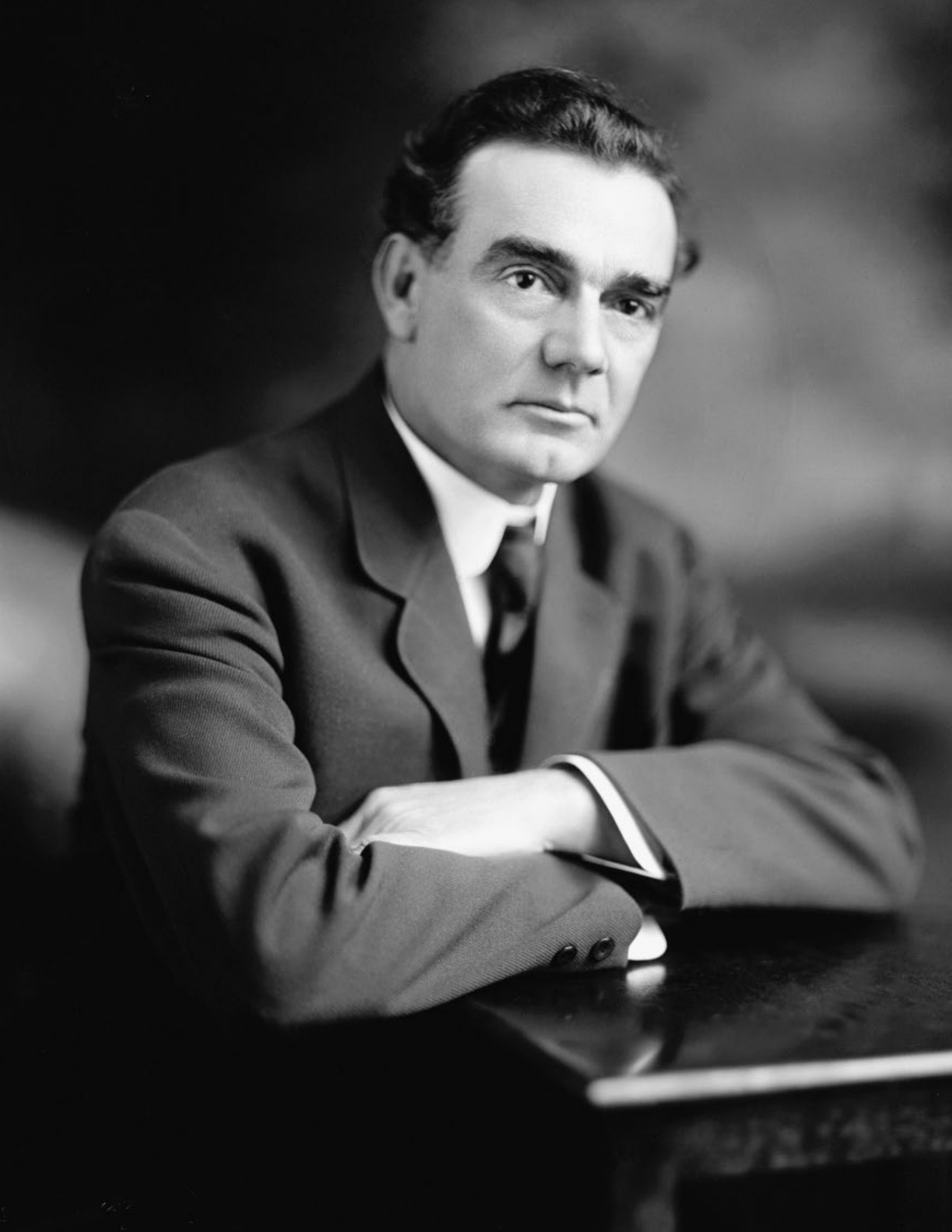

served as chairman of the committee on charitable and public institutions and also as a member of the education committee. His principal legislative accomplishments were securing more funds for charity hospitals and helping to pass the first state appropriation for agricultural high schools.[7]

In 1912 Representative Arsène Pujo, a Lake Charles lawyer who served five terms in the House and rose to chair the Banking and Currency Committee when Democrats gained control of the chamber in 1911, abruptly announced that he would not seek re-election to a sixth term.[8] The district he represented, then Louisiana's 7th Congressional District, encompassed eight parishes in southwestern Louisiana, stretching eastward from the Texas border to the southern center of the state—including Opelousas and Lake Charles (the latter had roughly 11,500 inhabitants according to the 1920 Census)—and terminating 50 miles west of the state capital of Baton Rouge. It was the least-populated congressional district in the state, with just over 165,000 inhabitants, and it overlapped the parishes that composed Lazaro's state senate district. Primarily rural, the district had an economy that was mainly agricultural; its chief crops were rice and cotton.

In July 1912 Lazaro declared his candidacy in an address in Ville Platte. His opposition in the primary included Phillip J. Chappius, a lawyer from Acadia Parish and a former mayor of Crowley, Louisiana; and John W. Lewis of Opelousas, a longtime political opponent who attacked Lazaro's state senate record as failing his rural constituency. Lazaro attached himself to the Democratic platform adopted at the national convention in Baltimore, Maryland, where Woodrow Wilson was nominated as the party's presidential candidate. His campaign was a Progressive laundry list borrowed largely from the national party's planks.[9]

But as often occurred in Louisiana's factionalized politics in the early 20th century, the campaign revolved largely around the personalities of the candidates and the byzantine network of political loyalties that undergirded them.[10] In the one-party South, Democratic primaries often placed this personality-cult spectacle on full display. During the campaign, an anonymous circular purported by the press (but denied by Lewis's campaign) to have been distributed by Lewis's supporters, intimated that Lazaro's Catholicism disqualified him from holding office.[11] More substantively, Lewis attacked Lazaro's fidelity to the legislative program of then-Louisiana Governor Luther Hall. Lazaro refuted Lewis's attacks across the district, addressing gatherings in English and French. Chappius, whose campaign seemed to focus more on Lewis than on Lazaro, ran well ahead in his home parish of Acadia, while Lazaro carried Evangeline and Calcasieu Parishes, the latter encompassing Lake Charles. Lewis defeated Lazaro in Cameron and St. Landry Parishes, but by relatively narrow margins. Lazaro won in the three-way contest with 3,422 votes, or roughly 38 percent of the vote; Lewis trailed with 32 percent; and Chappius finished third with 30 percent.[12] In the general election, Lazaro easily beat Socialist candidate Otis Putnam, winning 87 percent of the vote. With this victory, Lazaro became the first Hispanic American to represent Louisiana in Congress and, eventually, the longest-serving Hispanic Representative until the generation of Members elected during the 1960s.[13]

When he took his seat in the 63rd Congress (1913–1915), Lazaro was assigned to three committees: Merchant Marine and Fisheries; Enrolled Bills; and Coinage, Weights, and Measures, assignments he would keep for the rest of his career. In 1915 he assumed the chairmanship of the Enrolled Bills Committee, a lower-tier panel whose handful of members oversaw the preparation of the bills awaiting the President's signature.[14] By his final term in the House, after Republicans had gained control of the chamber, Lazaro was the Ranking Minority Member on the Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee. The assignment to the Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee, an upper-tier panel in terms of its attractiveness to Members during the bulk of Lazaro's service, proved an important one for the Louisianan.[15] It provided him a prime platform for tending to the transportation issues that were central to the agricultural business in his district and for promoting federal funding for Louisiana's myriad waterways projects.[16]

The district remained unchanged during Lazaro's tenure, partly because Congress failed to reapportion House seats after the 1920 Census.[17] Lazaro faced opposition in the general election only twice in his subsequent seven re-election campaigns: In 1914 and 1916 he defeated a Republican candidate and a Socialist candidate with 86 percent and 95 percent of the vote, respectively.[18] His only significant electoral challenge occurred in the 1916 primary, when many in his district were infuriated by his support of Democratic gubernatorial candidate Rufus Pleasant over Progressive John Parker. Lazaro had tried to avoid publicly endorsing either camp and had even cut short a campaign trip for Pleasant that he had been urged to take by the state Democratic committee. Pleasant won, but Progressives in the district ran two candidates from Lake Charles against Lazaro in the Democratic primary on September 2: T. Arthur Edwards, a lawyer and district attorney, and Judge Alfred Barbee.[19] Edwards campaigned vigorously. Pointedly attacking Lazaro's record, he told a crowd, "It would be a pity to spoil a good fisherman and hunter [Barbee] by making a congressman of him. You voters made a poor congressman out of Lazaro, who was a good physician."[20] But such rhetorical flourishes could not diminish Lazaro's record of constituent service. He ultimately prevailed with 55 percent of the vote, carrying seven of the eight parishes in the district. Edwards finished second, with 25 percent of the vote.[21] Firmly established after the primary, Lazaro was promoted by friends and supporters for Louisiana's 1920 gubernatorial race, but he declined to enter the contest, and there is no evidence that he ever seriously considered running for any public office besides a House seat.[22] By 1923 he was the dean of the Louisiana delegation and so well placed that his biennial campaign rationale was simple: Constituents would be unwise to turn him out for a less-experienced candidate. "No one," he wrote a local newspaper editor, "whether he is running a farm, store, bank or any other business will discharge a faithful and efficient employee merely to take on a new one, and the business of Government is the same as any other business."[23]

Above all else, Lazaro was keenly sensitive to the interests of the large portion of his constituents who were farmers, partly because of a personal connection. He managed his family plantation, even while in Congress, and sought annually to bring crops to market. As he explained to Harry Kapp of the Louisiana Farm Bureau Federation, "Everything I have is invested in the farm I live on, and my only money crop is cotton. Therefore I am vitally interested in doing all I can to help the farmer."[24]

Just weeks after the opening of the 63rd Congress, freshman Lazaro boldly proclaimed his opposition to a tariff bill authored by fellow Democrat Oscar Underwood of Alabama, chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee. The Underwood–Simmons Tariff, as it became known, put sugar on the free list and slashed rates on other imported agricultural products, such as cotton, by 50 percent. The bill particularly threatened Louisiana's numerous small-scale rice growers by opening American markets to less-expensive Asian rice. In a speech inserted into the appendix of the *Congressional Record*, Lazaro based his opposition on personal beliefs and on the overwhelming wishes of his constituents—and availed himself of a rule that allowed members of the Democratic Caucus to vote independently of the party on issues where their campaign pledges diverged from the party's position. Halving the rice tariff, Lazaro warned, "would prove the ruin and disaster of this growing industry, which is the mainstay and the foundation upon which rests the business interest of my section and upon which it depends." Such a calamity, he added, would eventually affect the consumer. For when Asian rice would be "dumped upon our shores in sufficient quantities to drive out and ruin the domestic industry … the imported rice of the Orient will be controlled by trusts and combinations, and the poor American consumer will pay a higher price for this staple food."[25] When the Underwood Tariff came to the House Floor for a vote later that fall—passing by a vote of 255 to 104—Lazaro was one of only four Democrats to oppose it (two of the other dissenters were also Louisianans).[26]

When the opportunity came in 1922 to boost tariff rates to protect the rice and sugar industries, Lazaro

firmly supported the Fordney–McCumber Tariff, which reset rates to levels that had been established in 1897 by the Dingley Tariff. On this matter, Lazaro and much of the Louisiana delegation were in opposition to the deeply ingrained 19th-century anti-tariff bias of most other Southern Members of Congress and were in line with "the modern agricultural and manufacturing interests of the New South," wrote one historian.[27]

Lazaro consistently monitored big farm bills that affected his agricultural constituency. In 1926 two leading members of the congressional farm bloc, House Agriculture Committee Chairman Gilbert N. Haugen of Iowa and Senate Agriculture and Forestry Committee Chairman Charles McNary of Oregon, introduced legislation to provide the first government support for the distressed farming industry by subsidizing the sale of surplus U.S. crops overseas. But the McNary–Haugen Bill presented Lazaro with a dilemma: Whereas Louisiana rice growers initially opposed the legislation, cotton growers supported an amended version. Lazaro opposed the initial McNary–Haugen measure, arguing that it favored Midwestern and Western farmers, particularly wheat producers, and put Southerners at a disadvantage. "To be frank with you," he wrote to a friend, "I cannot think of any legislation that could be more harmful to agriculture than this measure.… This whole propaganda back of the McNary–Haugen Bill comes from a radical element in the West, and they are trying to brow-beat the Administration into giving them a subsidy out of the Treasury at the expense of the taxpayers, including our Southern farmers."[28] But in 1927 Lazaro dropped his opposition to the bill when an amended version that rice growers felt would promote better price structures emerged from committee. When the House passed the measure on February 17, 1927, Lazaro was in a minority of three members from the Louisiana delegation to support it. Congress passed the McNary–Haugen Farm Relief Bill twice, in 1927 and in 1928, only to have President Calvin Coolidge veto both versions. Though McNary–Haugen failed to become law, it set the parameters about the debate over farm subsidies and supports that prevailed in the coming decades.[29]

Lazaro focused not just on trade policy and farm support, but also on transportation issues that affected farmers. Here his Merchant Marine assignment proved invaluable. The shipping shortage during the First World War that nearly devastated the Southern cotton industry convinced Lazaro of the need to augment the American Merchant Marine and national shipping infrastructure. "Transportation, like taxes, mingles with the cost of goods in every step of their making," he explained in 1917 on the eve of U.S. intervention. "For this reason conveyance from one community to another and from one country to another helps to make a people great, efficient, progressive, prosperous and powerful. This is why the broad-minded, farseeing, unselfish American citizen now begins to pause, think, and ask for legislation more and more with regard to transportation."[30] World War I proved that America must boost its shipping capacity far beyond its ability to haul only a tenth of its total commerce. Speaking on behalf of a 1919 bill to greatly expand funding for the merchant marine, Lazaro told colleagues, "It is just as foolish for a nation to depend on foreign ships to carry on its foreign business as it would be for a department store to depend on its competitors to deliver its goods to its customers."[31] With the input and approval of Lazaro's panel, and broad bipartisan backing, the Jones Merchant Marine Act passed both chambers and was signed into law in 1920. The act committed the United States "to do whatever was necessary to develop and encourage the maintenance" of a merchant marine sufficient to handle the majority of American commerce "and serve as a naval or military auxiliary in time of war or national emergency, ultimately to be owned and operated privately by the citizens of the United States." The bill repealed wartime emergency shipping legislation, restructured the U.S. Shipping Board, and directed that entity to promote more shipping routes and facilitate the expansion of the merchant marine fleet.[32]

Like many Members of the Louisiana and Texas delegations, Lazaro advocated allocating federal funds to complete the Intracoastal Waterway canal project from New Orleans to Corpus Christi. A longtime advocate for reining in railroad rates that cut into farmers' profit

margins, he believed the waterway was vital to agricultural development in the region. "I represent a district that is altogether agricultural," he testified before the House Committee on Rivers and Harbors in 1926, "and one of our biggest problems today is the question of freight rates, and I do not think that we can have any relief in this country in that line until we develop and use our waterways."[33] Lazaro's seat on the Merchant Marine Committee provided him a prime perch from which to make that argument, and he was instrumental in securing a $16 million appropriation for the section of the canal linking the Mississippi River with Galveston, Texas.[34] The modern Gulf Intracoastal Waterway stretches from Brownsville, Texas, to Fort Myers, Florida, and by the end of the 20th century it was used to transport commodities worth tens of billions of dollars.[35]

Lazaro's positions on national issues were often those held by many Southern Members of Congress. His stand on two major constitutional amendments in the 65th Congress—the 18th Amendment, establishing the prohibition of alcohol, and the 19th Amendment, granting women the right to vote—was anchored in the widely shared Southern sensitivity concerning federal interference in states' rights. Both issues, he insisted, should be decided by direct ballot in individual states, not by federal statute. Believing alcohol was medicinal, Lazaro, along with two of his seven Louisiana colleagues, voted against the Prohibition Amendment that passed the House in December 1917 and became law in January 1919 after its ratification by the states.[36] He also opposed a string of proposed measures granting women the right to vote—including two votes by the House that passed the 19th Amendment by wide margins in January 1918 and May 1919—on the grounds that the states would be yielding too much power to the federal government.[37] "We have had our experience with the Federal Government interfering with suffrage once before," during Reconstruction, Lazaro explained in 1916 campaign literature, "and I do not think our people are willing to take any chances with a measure of this kind, which would reopen old sores and compel us to assume the burden of eliminating the negro woman's vote."[38]

As the Ranking Member of the Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee, Lazaro was one of four House managers appointed to the conference committee that hammered out an important measure. Passing the House and Senate as the Radio Act of 1927, the measure represented Congress's first comprehensive attempt to regulate broadcasting. It created the Federal Radio Commission to oversee licensing and to regulate the nascent broadcasting industry "as public convenience, interest, or necessity requires." But it split the ultimate authority for controlling radio broadcasts among disparate entities: the three branches of the military, the Secretary of Commerce, and the Interstate Commerce Commission. Arguing for the measure on the House Floor, Lazaro admitted on behalf of the conferees: "While we do not claim this bill to be perfect, we feel it is the very best that could be agreed upon at this time. With the absolute chaos in the air and the demand of the public for relief, I think it is our duty to pass this measure at this time."[39] Lazaro's speech won applause, and shortly thereafter the House agreed to the conference report by voice vote. Within less than a decade, the growth of the broadcasting industry demonstrated the necessity for centralized control over the administration of the airwaves, leading to the passage of the landmark Communications Act of 1934.[40]

The 1927 Radio Bill marked Lazaro's legislative swan song. Late in the 69th Congress (1925–1927), Lazaro's health deteriorated, eventually necessitating abdominal surgery. Following an operation on March 9, 1927, Lazaro seemed to make a strong recovery, but then his condition worsened, and he died on March 30 at Garfield Hospital in Washington, D.C., of complications from an abscess. Word of his death shocked political observers and friends alike, most of whom were unaware of the severity of his illness. The *Clarion-Progress* of Opelousas mourned, "A pall of gloom overhangs St. Landry parish at the loss of its beloved statesman, citizen, and friend."[41] Condolence letters and telegrams flooded the Lazaro home in Washington, D.C. "Death intervened to end untimely a public career of genuine usefulness," observed the New Orleans *Times-Picayune*, adding, "Louisiana has no representative at the

national capital more loyal than he, and both the state and his district were given many proofs of his devotion to their interests. His passing is therefore accounted a serious loss to the commonwealth and will be widely and sincerely mourned."[42] Befitting Lazaro's position as dean of the Louisiana delegation, a large congressional party escorted his body by train to Opelousas, where thousands of mourners waited. Lazaro's passing was a personal loss to many in his home parish, distinct from the political void left by his absence. On the 20-mile ride north to Ville Platte, those in the funeral entourage were awestruck by the outpouring of "grief … unmistakably manifested everywhere." The district's numerous farmers and their families, many of them Lazaro's former patients, lined the route, and students and faculty stood outside each schoolhouse to pay their respects as a funeral procession of more than 300 vehicles wound along the highway. "Never have I seen anything like it—mile after mile on public roads, vehicles of all kinds carrying people bowed down with grief, not one of them in the spirit of curiosity, but genuine sorrow and regret," recalled Representative James Z. Spearing of Louisiana.[43] Lazaro was interred in the Old City Cemetery in Ville Platte.

FOR FURTHER READING

Biographical Directory of the United States Congress, "Ladislas Lazaro," http://bioguide.congress.gov.

MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION

Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, Louisiana State University (Baton Rouge). *Papers*: 1894–1928, seven feet. Personal, medical practice, and congressional papers and correspondence, several photographs, and memorabilia. Includes copies of political speeches, House bills, government reports, political broadsides, and correspondence pertaining to state and local political campaigns. Lazaro's interests in agriculture and the tariff questions related to the rice industry also are reflected. Finding aid in repository.

NOTES

1 As only the second Hispanic Representative in Congress—after Romualdo Pacheco of California, who served from 1879 to 1883—Lazaro was also only the second Hispanic Member who was eligible to chair a committee.

2 The area had been settled by persons of French and Spanish origin in the late 1700s and lay on the edge of the Mamou Prairie, from which the town took its name. Ville Platte, derived from the French for "flat town," was incorporated shortly before the Civil War and eventually lay along the Texas and Pacific Railway. Clare D'Artois Leeper, *Louisiana Places* (Baton Rouge: Legacy Publishing Company, 1976): 246.

3 Sources are inconclusive about whether Lazaro had any siblings. At least one internal memo in Lazaro's files, discussing the disposition of his House salary upon his death, referenced a sister named Belle. See the untitled memorandum of 22 December 1922, C-38, Congressional File, Box 3, Folder 27, October–December 1922 Papers of Ladislas Lazaro, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge (hereinafter referred to as Papers of Ladislas Lazaro). No other biographical sources, including Lazaro's obituaries, list siblings. Information on Lazaro's paternal relatives is included in a long letter from his cousin Lazar Popovich. See Papers of Ladislas Lazaro, Popovich to Lazaro, 10 April 1922.

4 De Rouen was born in Ville Platte and was two years Lazaro's junior. He succeeded Lazaro in a special election on August 23, 1927. His reminiscences are included in a set of memorial addresses for Lazaro delivered on the House Floor in May 1928. See *Congressional Record*, House, 70th Cong., 1st sess. (13 May 1928): 8589.

5 Glenn R. Conrad, ed., *A Dictionary of Louisiana Biography: Vol. I, A to M* (New Orleans: Louisiana Historical Association, 1988): 493.

6 Speeches from Lazaro's first Louisiana senate campaign can be found in the Papers of Ladislas Lazaro, C-37, Congressional File, Box 1b, Folder 1: 1907–1913.

7 Papers of Ladislas Lazaro, C-39, Typewritten Speeches and Speech Notes, n.d., Box 6, Folder 52, undated biographical profile of Lazaro.

8 Pujo, who was also in charge at the time of an influential special committee looking into the trusts and financial combinations—which received much press attention in an election year—told the press he was retiring because he was "sick" of the election cycle and the pace of Members' lives. See, for example, "43 in House to Retire," 2 September 1912, *Baltimore Sun*: 9; and William L. Altdorfer, "A Startling Exodus of Statesmen from Public Office," 5 May 1912, *Washington Post*: SM4.

9 As Lazaro told constituents, he unreservedly endorsed "Federal control and support of levees; tariff for revenue, limited to the necessity of government conducted honestly and economically and with efficiency; a revision of the tariff in the people's interest

without injuring any legitimate industry; a tariff on rice, sugar and lumber; the full exercise of the state of their reserved power; the income tax; publicity and curtailment of campaign expenses; primaries in selecting residential candidates; the election of the United States Senators by the people; vocational and agricultural education; good roads and drainage; a department of labor represented in the President's Cabinet." Papers of Ladislas Lazaro, C-37, Congressional File, Box 1b, Folder 1: 1907–1913.

10 V. O. Key, Jr., *Southern Politics in State and Nation*, 2nd ed. (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1977): 156–182.

11 "Circular Sent Causes Anger—Brings in Religion," 2 September 1912, *The Daily-Picayune* (New Orleans): 3.

12 "Lewis and Lazaro," 6 September 1912, *The Daily-Picayune* (New Orleans): 1, 10. Local newspapers speculated that the race might be close enough to force a runoff primary on September 24, 1912, but there is no evidence that a runoff was ever held.

13 Of the Hispanic representatives whose careers ended before World War II, only Félix Córdova Dávila, a Puerto Rican Resident Commissioner, served longer in Congress. Dávila was in office roughly eight months longer than Lazaro. Dennis Chavez of New Mexico served two terms in the House (1931–1935) before being appointed to a vacancy in the U.S. Senate in May 1935, winning election to the remainder of the term, and being re-elected four times. He served until his death in 1962.

14 Enrolled Bills Committee chairmanship and composition information in *Congressional Directory*, 64th Congress (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1916): 185; *Congressional Directory*, 65th Congress (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1917): 187. Lazaro was just the second Hispanic American to chair a standing congressional committee; Romualdo Pacheco was the first.

15 Charles Stewart III, "Committee Hierarchies in the Modernizing House, 1875–1947," *American Journal of Political Science* 36, no. 4 (November 1992): 835–856; see especially Stewart's table on "Committee Attractiveness," p. 845. Created in 1887, the Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee had gradually acquired jurisdiction over a wide range of maritime matters, including all policy affecting water transportation, shipping and shipbuilding, registering and licensing vessels, navigation, the Coast Guard, lighthouses, the Panama Canal, and, eventually, regulations governing radio communications. See, for example, Kathleen A. Dolan, "Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee, House," in the *Encyclopedia of the U.S. Congress*, vol. 3 (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995): 1391–1392.

16 The Agriculture Committee was a prominent assignment at this point and seemingly an attractive panel for a Member from a rural district. There is no mention in any of Lazaro's existing papers or in press accounts that he sought a seat on the Agriculture Committee, which typically was dominated by Southerners. Only a handful of Louisianans served on the panel in the first half of the 20th century, and only one (James Aswell) served during Lazaro's tenure.

17 For more information on the reapportionment battle during the 1920s, see Charles Eagles, *Democracy Delayed: Congressional Reapportionment and the Urban-Rural Conflict in the 1920s* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1990).

18 "Election Statistics, 1920 to Present," http://history.house.gov/institution/election-statistics/election-statistics. For results prior to 1920, see Michael J. Dubin et al., *U.S. Congressional Elections, 1788–1997* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., 1998).

19 References to the campaign can be found in the 20 August 1916, New Orleans *Times-Picayune*: C4.

20 "Edwards Attacks Lazaro's Record," 24 August 1916, New Orleans *Times-Picayune*: 5.

21 For results, see the 15 September 1916, New Orleans *Times-Picayune*: 3.

22 Lazaro's correspondence does not indicate that he ever seriously considered a run for statewide office.

23 Ladislas Lazaro to Albert Tate, 14 June 1924, Papers of Ladislas Lazaro, Box 4.

24 Letter of 4 May 1926, Lazaro to Harry F. Knapp, Papers of Ladislas Lazaro, C-40, Congressional File, Box 8, Folder 81, MS 1113.

25 *Congressional Record*, Appendix, 63rd Cong., 1st sess. (28 April 1913): 16–18. For more on Congress and tariff policy throughout U.S. history, see Robert W. Barrie, *Congress and the Executive: The Making of U.S. Foreign Trade Policy, 1789–1986* (New York: Taylor & Francis, 1987); Robert W. Barrie, "Tariffs and Trade," in *The Encyclopedia of the U.S. Congress*, vol. 4, Donald Bacon et al., ed., (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995): 1909–1923.

26 *Congressional Record*, House, 63rd Cong., 1st sess. (30 September 1913): 5274; "Tariff Bill Passes House, 254 to 103," 1 October 1913, *New York Times*: 1.

27 Christopher M. Lee, "Organization for Survival: The Rice Industry and Protective Tariffs, 1921–1929," *Louisiana History* 35, no. 4 (Fall 1994): 454.

28 Lazaro to I. N. McCollister, 2 June 1924, Papers of Ladislas Lazaro, Box 4; Unaddressed Letter from Lazaro to "Dear Friend," 24 June 1926, Papers of Ladislas Lazaro, Box 5.

29 For more on the McNary–Haugen legislation, see Darwin N. Kelly, "The McNary–Haugen Bills, 1924–1928," *Agricultural History* 14 (1940): 170–180; Steve Neal, *McNary of Oregon: A Political Biography* (Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1985).

30 Ladislas Lazaro, "The High Cost of Living," *Congressional Record*, Extension of Remarks, Appendix, 64th Cong., 2nd sess. (27 February 1917): 553.

31 *Congressional Record*, House, 66th Cong., 1st sess. (8 November 1919): 8152.

32 See Stathis, *Landmark Legislation*: 181. The act was named for Senator Wesley Livsey Jones of Washington state, chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee, http://bioguide.congress.gov. For more on the act, see Michael McClintock, "Merchant Marine Act of 1920," in Brian K. Landsberg, ed., *Major Acts of Congress*, vol. 2 (New York: Thompson-Gale, 2004): 267–270; Clinton H. Whitehurst, Jr., *The U.S. Merchant Marine: In Search of an Enduring Maritime Policy* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1983); and Clinton H. Whitehurst, Jr., *The U.S. Shipbuilding Industry: Past, Present, and Future* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1986).

33 Hearings on the Subject of the Improvement of the Louisiana and Texas Intracoastal Waterway from the Mississippi River, at or Near New Orleans, LA., to Corpus Christi, Tex., held before the Committee on Rivers and Harbors, House of Representatives, 69th Congress, 1st sess. (19 and 23 March 1926): 52.

34 In fact, Lazaro's obituaries list his work on the canal as one of his prime legislative accomplishments. For example, see "Dr. Lazaro, Dean of Congressmen, Dead at Capital," 31 March 1927, New Orleans *Times-Picayune*: 1.

35 See a history of the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway in *The Handbook of Texas Online*, http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/GG/rrg4_print.html (accessed 7 October 2009).

36 *Congressional Record*, House, 65th Cong., 2nd sess. (17 December 1917): 469–470. Louisiana eventually became the 14th state to ratify the amendment, on 3 August 1918.

37 See the roll call tallies for both dates: *Congressional Record*, House, 65th Cong., 2nd sess. (10 January 1918): 810; and *Congressional Record*, House, 66th Cong., 1st sess. (21 May 1919): 93–94.

38 Lazaro campaign pamphlet 1916, page 8; Papers of Ladislas Lazaro. His opposition to women's suffrage had been long-standing; in the state senate he asked in a 1910 floor speech, "Why should [a] woman long for some other sphere in which to serve when she can exhibit all that is grand and beautiful and glorious and christianlike [*sic*] in the domestic circle?… To the woman who wants to vote to better our government I would say in the language of Roosevelt, stay at home and 'raise good citizens and you need not worry about our government.'"

39 *Congressional Record*, House, 69th Cong., 2nd sess. (29 January 1927): 2578.

40 See House Rpt. no. 1886, "Conference Report on Regulation of Radio Communication," 69th Congress, 2nd sess. (27 January 1927): 1–19. For a history of broadcast regulator acts, see Robert W. Van Sickel, "Communications Act of 1934," in Brian K. Landsberg, ed., *Major Acts of Congress*, vol. 1 (New York: MacMillan/Thompson-Gale, 2004): 142–146.

41 "Dr. L. Lazaro Dies in Washington," 1 April 1927, *Clarion-Progress* (Opelousas, LA): 1.

42 "Representative Lazaro," 31 March 1927, New Orleans *Times-Picayune*: 8.

43 *Congressional Record*, House, 70th Cong., 1st sess. (13 May 1928): 8592.

"The duty of one aspiring to political leadership is to think with his people and with courage endeavor to point out the path of honor and prosperity. His aim should be, not to act the part of the demagogue and cunningly watch for the favoring breezes of popular passion but to act the part of the constructive statesman and to heroically and sincerely give direction to public opinion."

Ladislas Lazaro
From a state senate speech c. 1907